

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA  
BRUNSWICK DIVISION

FILED  
U.S. DISTRICT COURT  
BRUNSWICK, GA 31525

2001 DEC -5 P 2:27

CLERK

*J. J. J.*

SEAN ASHLEY DEVERGER,

Plaintiff,

v.

CIVIL ACTION NO.: CV207-127

GLYNN COUNTY SHERIFF'S  
DEPARTMENT and GLYNN-  
BRUNSWICK NARCOTICS  
ENFORCEMENT TEAM,

Defendants.

**MAGISTRATE JUDGE'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Plaintiff, who is currently being detained at the Glynn County Detention Center in Brunswick, Georgia, filed an action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983. A detainee proceeding against officers or employees of government entities must comply with the mandates of the Prison Litigation Reform Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915 & 1915A. In determining compliance, the court shall be guided by the longstanding principle that *pro se* pleadings are entitled to liberal construction. Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520, 92 S. Ct. 594, 596, 30 L. Ed. 2d 652 (1972); Walker v. Dugger, 860 F.2d 1010, 1011 (11th Cir. 1988).

28 U.S.C § 1915A requires a district court to screen the complaint for cognizable claims before or as soon as possible after docketing. The court must dismiss the complaint or any portion thereof that is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon

which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary damages from a defendant who is immune to such relief. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A (b)(1) and (2).

In Mitchell v. Farcass, 112 F.3d 1483, 1490 (11th Cir. 1997), the Eleventh Circuit interpreted the language contained in 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii), which is nearly identical to that contained in the screening provisions at § 1915A(b). As the language of § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii) closely tracks the language of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6), the court held that the same standards for determining whether to dismiss for failure to state a claim under Rule 12(b)(6) should be applied to prisoner complaints filed pursuant to § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii). Mitchell, 112 F.3d at 1490. The Court may dismiss a complaint for failure to state a claim only where it appears beyond a doubt that a *pro se* litigant can prove no set of facts that would entitle him to relief. Hughes v. Rowe, 449 U.S. 5, 10, 101 S. Ct. 173, 176, 66 L. Ed. 2d 163 (1980); Mitchell, 112 F.3d at 1490. While the court in Mitchell interpreted § 1915(e), its interpretation guides this Court in applying the identical language of § 1915A.

Plaintiff asserts he was pulled over by members of the Glynn County Narcotics Team. Plaintiff contends Officer Cory Sassa approached his car and told him to get out of the car. Plaintiff also contends four (4) white police officers threw him to the ground, even though he did not have a weapon or resist arrest. Plaintiff alleges he was searched and placed in the back of a police car. Plaintiff avers Lieutenant Lue informed him he was being charged with possession of drugs. Plaintiff also avers he was then taken to the Glynn County Detention Center, where he was denied medical attention.

Plaintiff names as Defendants the Glynn County Sheriff's Department and the Glynn-Brunswick Narcotics Enforcement Team ("GBNET"). While local governments

qualify as "persons" to whom section 1983 applies, Monell v. Dep't of Soc. Servs., 436 U.S. 658, 663, 98 S. Ct. 2018, 2022, 56 L. Ed. 2d 611 (1978); Parker v. Williams, 862 F.2d 1471, 1477 (11th Cir. 1989), sheriff's departments, as mere arms of such governments, are not generally considered legal entities subject to suit. See Grech v. Clayton County, Ga., 335 F.3d 1326, 1343 (11th Cir. 2003). Accordingly, Plaintiff cannot state a claim against the Glynn County Sheriff's Department or the GBNET, as the Glynn County Sheriff's Department (including divisions thereof) is merely the vehicle through which the county governs and is not a proper party defendant. See Shelby v. City of Atlanta, 578 F. Supp. 1368, 1370 (N.D. Ga. 1984).

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, it is my **RECOMMENDATION** that Plaintiff's Complaint be **DISMISSED** for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

**SO REPORTED** and **RECOMMENDED**, this 5<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2007.

  
JAMES E. GRAHAM  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE